

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of )  
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Teresio SIGNAROLDI et al. ) Group Art Unit: Unassigned  
)  
Application No.: Unassigned ) Examiner: Unassigned  
)  
Filed: January 18, 2002 )  
)  
For: IMPROVEMENTS IN AN )  
RELATING TO UNDERWATER )  
PIPE-LAYING )  
)  
)  
)

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination of the above-captioned application, please enter the following amendment.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 3, 5-7, 10, 12-19, 21, 23, and 24 as follows:

1. (Amended) A pipe-laying vessel comprising an upwardly extending tower assembly defining a path down which the pipe passes as a pipeline is being laid by the vessel, and a lower guide arrangement for guiding the pipeline after it has passed down the tower, the lower guide arrangement including a plurality of sets of guide rollers spaced apart along the path of the pipeline and defining the lateral limits of the path, the guide